

***Americans for Safe Access Program to Provide Training
For Maryland Medical Cannabis Compliance Inspectors***

ASA to Work with Regulators to Ensure Highest Level of Industry Compliance

Baltimore, MD – Americans for Safe Access (ASA) has been selected to provide training for compliance inspectors operating under the authority of the Natalie M. LaPrade Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission. The auditors are charged with ensuring members of the state's new medical cannabis industry comply with all applicable regulations, which were finalized by the Commission earlier this month.

In addition to developing its own rigorous compliance protocols, Maryland has adopted the American Herbal Product Association's (AHPA) *Recommendations to Regulators* in the areas of: cultivation, distribution and manufacturing. AHPA's guidelines offer seed-to-consumption product safety and quality control measures that will ensure rigid oversight of the state's medical cannabis industry.

Auditor training will be offered through the Patient Focused Certification (PFC) program, a project of ASA with extensive experience training members of the cannabis industry to meet strict regulatory compliance guidelines. PFC has trained thousands of employees of the medical cannabis industry and is currently under contract with the District of Columbia to train all medical cannabis staff to achieve comprehensive regulatory compliance.

"The Maryland Commission has done an exemplary job in considering the health and safety of patients and the public in the creation of these medical cannabis regulations and is a shining example of what patients should expect from the medical cannabis industry" said Steph Sherer, executive director of Americans for Safe Access. "We are honored that our Patient Focused Certification (PFC) program can aide in the implementation of regulations that will give patients' confidence in the safety and quality of medical cannabis products obtained through this program."

Maryland has also adopted laboratory requirements based on the American Herbal Pharmacopoeia's (AHP) cannabis monograph as well as the AHPA guidelines. AHP monographs are commonly used by regulatory agencies such as the FDA, USDA, and the EU to provide guidance for regulating botanical medicines.

The AHP cannabis monograph and the AHPA cannabis guidelines offer the most comprehensive regulatory and product safety guidance as well as Best Business

Practices for the production of cannabis and cannabis products. Since the release of the cannabis monograph in 2013 and the 2012 release of AHPA's guidelines, components of these guidance documents have been included in regulations in states such as Alaska, Florida, New York, Illinois, Maryland, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Hawaii, and Colorado. Additionally, both Pennsylvania and California's pending legislation include components of these guidance documents.

"We are focused on implementing industry best practices to ensure Maryland's medical cannabis compliance inspectors are the best trained in the nation," said Hannah Byron, Executive Director of the Natalie M. LaPrade Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission. "The rigorous regulatory and clinical oversight called for in the ASA PFC program will ensure the safety, security and quality of the medicine being grown, processed, inspected and delivered in our state."

The PFC program was developed following a long-term collaboration between ASA, AHPA and the AHP to address product safety and quality control standards for the medical cannabis industry as commercial distribution of medical cannabis programs become an established part of many state laws.

"PFC has already led the way to develop effective medical cannabis regulations, and now we are moving forward to get those regulations implemented in state laws and providing training to ensure the adoption of those guidelines by cannabis facilities," said Kristin Nevedal, director of the Patient Focused Certification program.

Further Information:

[Patient Focused Certification Website](#)

[AHPA Guidelines](#)

[APH Cannabis Monograph](#)

[Maryland Regulation](#)

About the Natalie M. LaPrade Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission

The Natalie M. LaPrade Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission develops policies, procedures and regulations to implement programs that ensure medical cannabis is available to qualifying patients in a safe and effective manner. The Commission oversees all licensing, registration, inspection and testing measures pertaining to Maryland's medical cannabis program and provides relevant program information to patients, physicians, growers, dispensers, processors, testing laboratories and caregivers.